

Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program Community Opinion Survey

Results

The NRP Policy Board held a series of five community meetings to present several options addressing NRP's immediate and long-term future. The meetings were structured around a survey of people's opinions about NRP's future funding, governance, staffing and neighborhood participation.

Three hundred and thirty four people attended the meetings; 210 ballots were submitted. The survey was also posted on the NRP Web site, with links from the City's and MCDA's Web sites; 153 ballots were submitted online. An additional 98 ballots were submitted by mail.

The following reflects the cumulative responses to the survey questions, as well as a breakdown of responses received at the meetings, through the mail and from the NRP Web site. Attached to this report is a compilation of the written comments that were submitted at the meetings on the survey form.

1. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
The Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) should be continued.

All responses:

355 (77.0%) Strongly Agree
51 (11.1%) Agree
15 (3.3%) Strongly Disagree
30 (6.5%) Disagree
10 (2.2%) No Opinion

Responses from meetings sub-total:

161 (76.7%) Strongly Agree
33 (15.7%) Agree
1 (0.5%) Strongly Disagree
10 (4.8%) Disagree
5 (2.4%) No Opinion

Responses from mail-in surveys sub-total:

94 (95.9%) Strongly Agree
3 (3.1%) Agree
0 (0.0%) Strongly Disagree
1 (1.0%) Disagree
0 (0.0%) No Opinion

Responses from Web site sub-total:

100	(65.4%)	Strongly Agree
15	(9.8%)	Agree
14	(9.2%)	Strongly Disagree
19	(12.4%)	Disagree
5	(3.3%)	No Opinion

2. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

The City should use revenue sources other than the Common Project to fill part or all of the gap.

All responses:

218	(47.5%)	Strongly Agree
133	(29.0%)	Agree
41	(8.9%)	Strongly Disagree
46	(10.0%)	Disagree
21	(4.6%)	No Opinion

Responses from meetings sub-total:

84	(40.2%)	Strongly Agree
72	(34.4%)	Agree
21	(10.0%)	Strongly Disagree
17	(8.1%)	Disagree
15	(7.2%)	No Opinion

Responses from mail-in surveys sub-total:

86	(87.8%)	Strongly Agree
9	(9.2%)	Agree
2	(2.0%)	Strongly Disagree
1	(1.0%)	Disagree
0	(0.0%)	No Opinion

Responses from Web site sub-total:

48	(31.6%)	Strongly Agree
52	(34.2%)	Agree
18	(11.8%)	Strongly Disagree
28	(18.4%)	Disagree
6	(3.9%)	No Opinion

3. **Which, if any, of the following revenue sources should be used to supplement the Common Project revenues allocated to NRP?** (Participants could choose more than one.)

All responses:

290 (57.2%) Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
74 (14.6%) City General Fund
98 (19.3%) None (Common Project only)
45 (8.9%) No Opinion

Responses from meetings sub-total:

126 (76.7%) Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
49 (15.7%) City General Fund
48 (0.5%) None (Common Project only)
25 (4.8%) No Opinion

Responses from mail-in surveys sub-total:

92 (85.2%) Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
10 (9.3%) City General Fund
4 (3.7%) None (Common Project only)
2 (1.9%) No Opinion

Responses from Web site sub-total:

72 (47.7%) Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
15 (9.9%) City General Fund
46 (30.5%) None (Common Project only)
18 (11.9%) No Opinion

4. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Neighborhoods should receive NRP funds to support organizing and citizen participation activities.

All responses:

285 (62.0%) Strongly Agree
110 (23.9%) Agree
24 (5.2%) Strongly Disagree
35 (7.6%) Disagree
6 (1.3%) No Opinion

Responses from meetings sub-total:

132 (62.9%) Strongly Agree
58 (27.6%) Agree
5 (2.4%) Strongly Disagree
11 (5.2%) Disagree
4 (1.9%) No Opinion

Responses from mail-in surveys sub-total:

86 (87.8%) Strongly Agree
9 (9.2%) Agree
1 (1.0%) Strongly Disagree
1 (1.0%) Disagree
1 (1.0%) No Opinion

Responses from Web site sub-total:

67 (44.1%) Strongly Agree
43 (28.3%) Agree
18 (11.8%) Strongly Disagree
23 (15.1%) Disagree
1 (0.7%) No Opinion

5. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

Neighborhoods should receive NRP funds to support implementation of projects and programs identified by the neighborhood as priorities in their Neighborhood Action Plans.

All responses:

309 (67.6%) Strongly Agree
106 (23.2%) Agree
13 (2.8%) Strongly Disagree
25 (5.5%) Disagree
4 (0.9%) No Opinion

Responses from meetings sub-total:

140 (67.6%) Strongly Agree
56 (27.1%) Agree
1 (0.5%) Strongly Disagree
9 (4.3%) Disagree
1 (0.5%) No Opinion

Responses from mail-in surveys sub-total:

88 (89.8%) Strongly Agree
9 (9.2%) Agree
0 (0.0%) Strongly Disagree
1 (1.0%) Disagree
0 (0.0%) No Opinion

Responses from Web site sub-total:

81 (53.3%) Strongly Agree
41 (27.0%) Agree
12 (7.9%) Strongly Disagree
15 (9.9%) Disagree
3 (2.0%) No Opinion

6. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
Phase II should require that the State mandate that 52.5% of NRP expenditures for housing and housing-related uses be met annually.

All responses:

69 (15.0%) Strongly Agree
80 (17.4%) Agree
110 (24.0%) Strongly Disagree
174 (37.9%) Disagree
26 (5.7%) No Opinion

Responses from meetings sub-total:

30 (14.4%) Strongly Agree
34 (16.3%) Agree
61 (29.3%) Strongly Disagree
68 (32.7%) Disagree
15 (7.2%) No Opinion

Responses from mail-in surveys sub-total:

1 (1.0%) Strongly Agree
4 (4.1%) Agree
15 (15.3%) Strongly Disagree
77 (78.6%) Disagree
1 (1.0%) No Opinion

Responses from Web site sub-total:

38 (24.8%) Strongly Agree
42 (27.5%) Agree
34 (22.2%) Strongly Disagree
29 (19.0%) Disagree
10 (6.5%) No Opinion

7. **Which of the following options should be chosen as a governance structure for the NRP?**

All responses:

170 (37.0%) The NRP Policy Board and City Planning Commission should remain separate.
82 (17.9%) The NRP Policy Board and City Planning Commission should be merged.
181 (39.4%) The NRP Policy Board and City Planning Commission should remain separate, but a structural mechanism should be established to facilitate greater coordination and collaboration between the two boards.
26 (5.7%) No Opinion

Responses from meetings sub-total:

- 73 (35.1%) The NRP Policy Board and City Planning Commission should remain separate.
- 22 (10.6%) The NRP Policy Board and City Planning Commission should be merged.
- 96 (46.2%) The NRP Policy Board and City Planning Commission should remain separate, but a structural mechanism should be established to facilitate greater coordination and collaboration between the two boards.
- 17 (8.2%) No Opinion

Responses from mail-in surveys sub-total:

- 73 (74.5%) The NRP Policy Board and City Planning Commission should remain separate.
- 6 (6.1%) The NRP Policy Board and City Planning Commission should be merged.
- 18 (18.4%) The NRP Policy Board and City Planning Commission should remain separate, but a structural mechanism should be established to facilitate greater coordination and collaboration between the two boards.
- 1 (1.0%) No Opinion

Responses from Web site sub-total:

- 24 (15.7%) The NRP Policy Board and City Planning Commission should remain separate.
- 54 (35.3%) The NRP Policy Board and City Planning Commission should be merged.
- 67 (43.8%) The NRP Policy Board and City Planning Commission should remain separate, but a structural mechanism should be established to facilitate greater coordination and collaboration between the two boards.
- 8 (5.2%) No Opinion

8. Which of the following options should be chosen as a staffing structure for the NRP?

All responses:

- 193 (42.0%) NRP should be staffed by employees hired directly by the governing board with staff remaining independent of the City.**
- 130 (28.3%) NRP and CPED/NCP staff should remain separate, but a structural mechanism should be established to facilitate greater cooperation and collaboration between NRP and CPED staff.**
- 56 (12.2%) NRP should be staffed by CPED/NCP employees within the City.**
- 47 (10.2%) NRP should be staffed by a new City department of citizen participation.**
- 33 (7.2%) No Opinion**

Responses from meetings sub-total:

- 82 (39.2%) NRP should be staffed by employees hired directly by the governing board with staff remaining independent of the City.
- 77 (36.8%) NRP and CPED/NCP staff should remain separate, but a structural mechanism should be established to facilitate greater cooperation and collaboration between NRP and CPED staff.
- 16 (7.7%) NRP should be staffed by CPED/NCP employees within the City.
- 19 (7.7%) NRP should be staffed by a new City department of citizen participation.
- 18 (8.6%) No Opinion

Responses from mail-in surveys sub-total:

- 85 (86.7%) NRP should be staffed by employees hired directly by the governing board with staff remaining independent of the City.
- 7 (7.1%) NRP and CPED/NCP staff should remain separate, but a structural mechanism should be established to facilitate greater cooperation and collaboration between NRP and CPED staff.
- 2 (2.0%) NRP should be staffed by CPED/NCP employees within the City.
- 1 (1.0%) NRP should be staffed by a new City department of citizen participation.
- 3 (3.1%) No Opinion

Responses from Web site sub-total:

- 26 (17.1%) NRP should be staffed by employees hired directly by the governing board with staff remaining independent of the City.
- 46 (30.3%) NRP and CPED/NCP staff should remain separate, but a structural mechanism should be established to facilitate greater cooperation and collaboration between NRP and CPED staff.
- 38 (25.0%) NRP should be staffed by CPED/NCP employees within the City.
- 30 (19.7%) NRP should be staffed by a new City department of citizen participation.
- 12 (7.9%) No Opinion

9. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

The City should strengthen formal public processes through which neighborhood organizations can participate meaningfully in the City's decisions on budgets, programs, projects, services and goal setting.

All responses:

- 289 (63.0%) Strongly Agree**
- 118 (25.7%) Agree**
- 19 (4.1%) Strongly Disagree**
- 17 (3.7%) Disagree**
- 16 (3.5%) No Opinion**

Responses from meetings sub-total:

121	(57.9%)	Strongly Agree
62	(29.7%)	Agree
10	(4.8%)	Strongly Disagree
4	(1.9%)	Disagree
12	(5.7%)	No Opinion

Responses from mail-in surveys sub-total:

84	(85.7%)	Strongly Agree
9	(9.2%)	Agree
2	(2.0%)	Strongly Disagree
2	(2.0%)	Disagree
1	(1.0%)	No Opinion

Responses from Web site sub-total:

84	(55.3%)	Strongly Agree
47	(30.9%)	Agree
7	(4.6%)	Strongly Disagree
11	(7.2%)	Disagree
3	(2.0%)	No Opinion

**Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program
Community Opinion Survey ~ Written Comments**

Q1: The Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) should be continued.

- But do not treat it as a sacred cow that cannot be changed. It must change to respond to new climate—use it as an opportunity to improve it!
- NRP should be continued in some form.
- Need to look at what NRP has done over the past 10 years—whether or not it should even continue.
- I strongly agree, but more has to be done to involve all people, not just homeowners.
- NRP is a unique and beneficial program. Beyond the home improvements and neighborhood enhancements, it has brought neighbors together as well as neighborhood groups and city staff/departments. It should be a permanent program with permanent funding.

Q2: The City should use other revenue sources to fill part or all of the gap.

- Why do we need the Common Project administration? Cut it out, lay off more MCDA staff, give the money to NRP.
- Must extend beyond 2009 to fund NRP as fully as possible.
- Have any local/national foundation funds been pursued to help fill the NRP gap?
- But I also want to get the City out of hock.
- Be careful. The news will want to simplify this down to NRP vs. Police and Fire. I think that Bob Miller needs to get in the news and shine a light on this issue in such a way that it clearly shows this is not true.
- Don't raise taxes any more.
- Yes, but don't take money from human services.
- I feel that parks, libraries, public safety should be funded adequately. If something has to be eliminated or greatly reduced, I'd rather see less money for NRP and more going to the above-mentioned.

Q3: Which, if any, of the following revenue sources should be used to supplement the Common Project revenues allocated to NRP?

- All of the alternative sources seem to have strings attached (i.e., CDBG). How do we ensure that neighborhoods have meaningful input into deciding on how/where the funds are used?
- This is an unfair question without sufficient information on what these different sources currently support!
- Other: bonds, fees, assessments, taxes
- Go back to legislature [for more funds].
- There have to be creative ways to let residents participate [in CDBG allocations].
- CDBG funds should be given to neighborhoods, not the City or MCDA to decide.

Q4: Neighborhoods should receive NRP funds to support organizing and citizen participation activities.

- Implies support for strong neighborhood role in citizen participation, though changes NRP's role.
- NRP has not provided adequate citizen participation activities.
- Without project/program funding, this is of little value beyond a "vent" mechanism.

Q5: Neighborhoods should receive NRP funds to support implementation of projects and programs identified by the neighborhood as priorities in their Neighborhood Action Plans.

- Let's look at some alternatives: NRP funds for basic neighborhood organization support, with remaining NRP funds in set-asides that neighborhoods would apply for (housing, community policing, economic development programs, etc.). Other ideas?
- The neighborhoods should decide how to spend funds. Keep the City Council out.
- Neighborhood groups have misappropriated too many funds. Take funds out of hands of neighborhood people who take it for themselves.
- Police/Fire/Public Works should be decided on a citywide basis; economic development/housing/library/parks/school etc. should have neighborhood input with some control via funds, or else it won't happen.
- Neighborhood Action Plans may be too narrow; others need to be involved in constructing the plans.
- At this time the Mayor and the City Council have not won me over to giving them any more control until their dismal track record improves. Yes, some neighborhood projects have been boners, but so have some of the Mayor and Council's.

Q6: Phase II should require that the State mandate that 52.5% of NRP expenditures for housing and housing-related uses be met annually

- Why would the requirement be annually and not by neighborhood?
- Why would it be better to meet the 52.5% goal annually?
- NRP should ask neighborhoods to set goals that ensure 52.5% is spent on housing.
- I applaud the need to do an annual review regarding the 52.5%. However, the ramifications for non-compliance may trigger projects that are not thoroughly thought off.
- There should be mechanisms in place to monitor and enforce the 52.5%, but not this one which unnecessarily ties neighborhood's plans.

Q7: Which of the following options should be chosen as a governance structure for the NRP?

- NRP Board should have 12 neighborhood reps on the board (thus the "N" in NRP).
- We need a combination of accountability, top down and bottom up, and efficiency. Not sure that any of these models do that.

- If NRP goes away, and CPED is in charge of everything with only a few reps from neighborhoods, how do neighborhoods remain involved and influential?
- They need to be separate so that NRP and neighborhoods can really have an independent, free voice.
- The NRP Policy Board should govern CPED as well. It should include the Mayor, jurisdiction presidents and four neighborhood reps only. No “community interests.”
- The Planning Commission should be abolished.

Q8: Which of the following options should be chosen as a staffing structure for the NRP?

- Staff needs to be free to serve neighborhoods and not also serve the City Council. Neighborhoods would be on the short end of that stick.
- As a City employee and a neighborhood board member, I see NRP’s strength is based on its being objective and not a City department.
- NRP staff should be independent, but reduced to three staff to support the Policy Board.
- CPED/NCP employees staffing NRP might be OK if it is done right. However, at this time, CPED /NCP is ill-defined. But you do need better coordination than you have now.

Q9: The City should strengthen formal public processes through which neighborhood organizations can participate meaningfully in the City’s decisions on budgets, programs, projects, services and goal setting.

- The city should have outreach requirements and should monitor them ensuring that the neighborhoods encourage inclusivity.
- It is disconcerting that the Mayor and Council Member Ostrow have not developed a plan to maintain/build relationships with the neighborhoods in the face of the almost certain loss of NRP funds. Recognizing the likely loss of these funds, it is important to position themselves and the City in a positive light. Those who have actively participated in the dispensing of the funds and those who have benefited from NRP will be disappointed to learn the City has no specific plan for continuing/strengthening relationships with neighborhoods. If there is no plan, why should citizens trust that their interests will be heard and addressed.
- It is very important to preserve and support neighborhood infrastructure and involvement in City decisions.
- I strongly agree, but not as a way to dilute NRP; perhaps as a long-term transition to a post-NRP world.
- I agree if neighborhood organizations get to remain independent and have their own continued funding.
- I strongly agree, but this does not mean that the Policy Board and Planning Commission should merge.
- The City ignores neighborhoods if their agenda is different.
- This should be in addition to NRP, not to replace it.